

Remarks

The Present Invention

The present relates to a labyrinth-like seal where there is a plurality of collection channels. One of the unique aspects of the present invention is that one of the collection channels is formed radially inward with respect to the radial fins and the other collection channels. Specifically, the Examiner's attention is directed to Fig. 1 and reference character 31, which identifies the collection channel which is positioned radially inward with respect to the radial fins and other collection channels. Such a structure allows for space optimization and, respectfully, is neither taught nor suggested in the prior art.

In order to highlight this unique aspect of the present invention, claim 25 recites this collection channel as the second collection channel. Applicants have chosen that instead of amending claim 1, a new claim 25 is presented herein which specifically highlights this second collection channel of the present invention.

Claim Status

Claims 3-25 are pending in this application.

Claims 5 and 12 have been withdrawn from prosecution.

Claims 1 and 2 have been canceled and have been incorporated into new claim 25 as the main claim. Additionally, the limitations of claim 21, namely the second collection channel has been included in claim 25.

Otherwise, the amendments made to claims 3, 4, 6, 8, 21, and 22 are made to bring these dependent claims in line with main claim 25.

Rejection under 35 USC 112

Claims 4 and 21 had been rejected as being indefinite.

With respect to claim 4, the Examiner indicated that it was unclear how many fins are being claimed. Claim 4 has been amended herein to point out that the two fins recited in claim 4 are the two fins recited in claim 25.

With respect to claim 21, claim 25 now recites a first and second collection channel.

Prior Art Rejections

Claim 1 had been rejected as anticipated by Judge;

claim 1 had also been rejected as being anticipated by Skumawitz;

claims 1, 22, 23, and 24 had been rejected as being unpatentable over a combination of Hubbard and Skumawitz; and

claims 2-4, 6-9, and 11-21 had been rejected as being unpatentable over a combination of Skumawitz and Sweeney.

In light of the incorporation of the limitations of claims 1, 2, and some of claim 21 into the main claim 25, it is submitted that the first three prior art rejections are now moot.

Turning to the fourth rejection, it is submitted that neither Skumawitz nor Sweeney teach the labyrinth seal as recited in the claims. Specifically, it is submitted that neither

Skumawitz nor Sweeny taken alone or in combination teach the specific embodiment of the second collection channel which is formed inwardly radial of the first collection channel and the radial fins.

Furthermore, it is submitted that none of the other references of Hubbard or Judge teach this second collection channel and, thus, it is respectfully submitted that the claim 25 and all of its dependent claims are patentable over the references taken alone or in combination.

Specification Amendments and Drawing Amendments

In reviewing the application in preparation for this submission, it was noted that a few typographical errors were in the application and those have been corrected herein. It is also noted that reference is made to the claims in the summary of the invention. This recitation has been deleted as being inconsistent with U.S. practice.

Finally, it is noted that reference is made to a transverse fin and that the drawings clearly depicted the transverse fin, however, the transverse fin was not designated by a reference character in either the drawings or the specification. Thus, the reference character for the transverse fin as described in the application has been added and the drawings have likewise been amended to add the reference character for the transverse fin.

Respectfully, no new matter has been added by way of these amendments.

Finally, with respect to the drawings, it is also noted that Fig. 1a uses the reference character 24 to designate the seal 27. Thus, Fig. 1a has been amended to replace reference character 24 with reference character 27.

Respectfully, no new matter has been added by way of these amendments and these amendments simply bring the specification and the drawings into conformity with one another.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested. Should any extensions of time or fees be necessary in order to maintain this Application in pending condition, appropriate requests are hereby made and authorization is given to debit Account No. 02-2275.

Respectfully submitted,

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